(b) the impacts thereof noticed on the growth of Beedi Industry?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) As per the reports received from the Central Excise Commission-erates, the central excise duty collected from cigarattes, other than filter cigarettes, of length no exceeding 60mm, for the period 1994-95 and 1995-96 (upto December) is as given below (provisional),

1994-95	Rs 44 crore
1995-96 (up to December)	Rs 67 crore

The revenue does not include excise duty collected on cut tobacco used for the manufacture of cigarettes.

(b) Excise duty on biris falling under sub-heading No.2404.39 of the Central Excise Tariff continues to be at Rs 5 per thousand biris (basic+additional excise duty) since 1993-94 The excise duties (Rs in crore) realised (which is an indicator of production trend) from biris since 1993-94 is as given below

1993-94	207
1994-95	208
1995-96	208 (Provisional)

[Translation]

Foreign Exchange Reserves

316 PROF RASA SINGH RAWAT Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) the position of foreign exchange and gold reserve in the country presently.

(b) whether the Government have assessed the foreign and internal loan liability of the country and if so, the details thereof,

(c) the policy of the Government for decreasing the foreign loan and mobilisation of capital by promoting national sources; and

(d) the efforts being made by the Government for making tax-collection more effective and strong?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) India's forex reserves comprising foreign currency assets, gold and SDRs as on July, 5, 1996 are given below

	(US $ Million)
Foreign currency assets of the RBI	17 743
Gold holding of the RBI	4,437
SDRs. holding of the Govt of India	11
Total	22,191

(b) The internal loan of the Government at the end of 1995-96 is estimated to be Rs 303359 crore The external debt of the country is estimated at Rs 318319 crore at the end of September 1995

(c) The Government lays considerable emphasis on mobilising internal resources to meet the investment requirements of the country The facilitate higher levels of investment and growth in the economy it is necessary to supplement the domestic savings with external resources The Government gives priority to mobilise non-debt creating flows by creating a favourable climate for Foreign Direct Investment

(d) Over the past five years a number of structural reforms covering both direct and indirect taxes have been undertaken Tax procedures have been simplified, rates have been lowered and greater buoyancy has been imparted into the tax structure These measures have started bearing fruits Also the share of direct taxes in the total tax collection is increasing because of these measures.

Fodder Machine

317 SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the present condition of the fodder machines (FOMETA) imported sometime back;

(b) the number of machines working at present their locations and if not working, the reasons therefor,

(c) whether any irregularity in this regard has come to light and

(d) if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) to (d) 50 Fodder Machines and some spares had been imported free of duties, in terms of ad-hoc exemption Order No 103 87 dated 30 3 1987 by Sanjeevani Fooder Production Pvt Ltd to be donated to Bharat Krishak Samaj for demonstration and training purposes It was required that these machines will not be sold, transferred or disposed of for a period of 5 years

The importers appeared to have failed to observe the conditions stipulated for duty free clearance of the said machines, as perescribed in the exemption order These were later found to be either under the control of M.s Sanjeevani Fooder Production Pvt Ltd and their sister concern M.s Fometa India Machines Pvt Ltd or sold to Governments of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh

The import of these machines has been adjudicated by the Commissioner of Customs Madras who, vide his Adjudication Order dated

5.3.93, has asked the importers to pay duty of Rs. 3.37 crores and redemption fine of Rs. 3.80 crores. He has also imposed personal penalty on the concerned firms and also on the Directors of both firms.

Presently, all the machines, including those assembled from the use of spares, are lying at Gummidipondi (TN), Madak (AP), Bagru, Bikaner & Malpura (Rajasthan), Bulandshahar, Chamoli, Jhansi & Bareilly (UP). These machines are not in use.

Judicial and Administrative System

318. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA :
SHRI RAM TAHAL CHOUDHARY :

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to improve the judicial and administrative system of the country.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D KHALAP) : (a) to (c). The improvement of the Judicial and administrative systems in the Courts is a continuous process To make an in-depth study of the problem of arrears and for improving Judicial and administrative system in Courts a committee of three Chief Justices of High Courts (Justice Malimath Committee) was constituted by the Government in 1989 The Committee has made several recommendation on various aspects covering jurisdictional and procedural modifications, the improvements in the judiciary, the setting up of specialised bodies such as tribunals/commissions to deal with specific types of cases, the fixation of Judges strength and appointment of Judges in High Courts the creation of more posts in the subordinate judiciary and a number of other general recommendations relating to modernisation of office equipment in courts and allocation of more funds to the judiciary These recommendations were forwarded inter-alia to all the concerned State Governments and the High Courts for necessary follow-up action

Further the problem of arrears of cases in Courts and their expeditious disposal was also considered in a meeting of the Chief Ministers and Chief Justices held on 4th December, 1993 under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister The Conference recommended several steps in a resolution it adopted for the speedy disposal of cases in the Courts/Tribunals This resolution has been commended to all the State Governments/UT Administrations and High Courts/ Tribunals for necessary action. The implementation of December, 1993 resolution and the recommendations made by the Working Groups were reviewed by the Law Ministers at their plenary meeting held in Calcutta in November, 1995. The resolutions adopted in these meeting have also been commended to all the concerned authorities for necessary follow-up action.

[English]

Domestic Entrepreneurship

319 SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are making efforts to support and promote domestic entrepreneurship;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent of sucess achieved therefrom so far?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c) Various measures have been taken to promote domestic entrepreneurship. Some of the measures taken by the Government, inter-alia, include reduction in excise duties, levy of countervailing duty wherever required, reduction in corporate tax, etc. So far, 25781 number of investment proposals in the delicensed sector, with proposed investment of Rs 504,782/-crores during the period 1 8.1991 to 31 5 96, have been filed.

Rural Credit System

320 DR ARUN KUMAR SARMA Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government propose to improve the rural credit system through Regional Rural Banks throughout the country; and

(b) if so the concrete steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) and (b) Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) are an important component of the rural credit delivery system The following steps have, therefore, been taken to strengthen and streamline the functioning of the RRBs

(i) With a view to widening the range and scope of their services, the RRBs have been allowed, with effect from 1 1 1994, to finance non-target groups to the extent of 60% of their fresh lending More discretionary powers have been given to them for purchase/discounting of cheques/